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ABSTRACT

This document explains how to conduct programs similar to the Broward County, Florida, "Reach Out for Literacy" (ROL) project aimed at providing basic skills education for undereducated adults and adults with limited English proficiency. The introduction lists the objectives for the ROL program and reports the number of adults (689 at 17 sites) served. Additional sections explain how to start a similar program, select teachers, gather materials, recruit students, and maintain the program. Six additional recommendations are offered: be aware of the importance of the contact person's enthusiasm and support for the program; do not become discouraged if immediate confirmation is not forthcoming from a potential site; be aware that what works at one site may not work at another; allow time for rapport to develop between students and teachers and to consider moving a teacher who is unsuccessful at one site to another site, where he/she might do well; be aware of the importance of well-trained teachers; and use additional personnel as resource teachers. The appendix contains a breakdown of the ROL population served by age, sex, race, and test scores; a list of organizations with which ROL had contact; a list of ROL sites; a map of ROL sites; strategies used by nonreaders to avoid having to reveal that they cannot read; a program referral form; promotional materials for the program, one of which is in Spanish; and four newspaper articles about ROL and its students. (CML)

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REACH OUT FOR LITERACY

PROJECT MANUAL

A 353 SPECIAL DEMONSTRATION PROJECT
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

HALLANDALE ADULT COMMUNITY CENTER
1000 S. W. 3rd STREET, HALLANDALE, FLORIDA 33009
(305) 457-2510

ROBERTA DURBIN
PRINCIPAL

LINDA FISCHER
PROJECT ADMINISTRATOR

HAROLD BEAR
PROJECT COORDINATOR

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
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BROWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

MOODY FISHER
SOUTH AREA SUPERINTENDENT

MEREDITH McCLEARY
DIRECTOR
ADULT AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION

ROBERTA DURBIN
PRINCIPAL

A SPECIAL THANKS TO THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY FOR THEIR COOPERATION AND SUPPORT

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1988 - 1989

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INTRODUCTION

This manual was prepared as part of the State of Florida, Department of Education Section 353 Project "Reach Out for Literacy" for the 1988-89 school year.

"Reach Out for Literacy "is a project that was formulated to address national and state priorities which call for the development of innovative strategies for adults who are functioning below the 9th grade level and are in need of basic and functional skills in reading, writing, and math. The project was aimed at providing educational assistance in meeting the needs of those adults least educated, as well as adults whose native language is not English.

The program objectives that were developed for Hallandale Adult Community Center project "Reach Out for Literacy" have been summarized as follows:

1. Identify and recruit adults in need of adult basic education;
2. Assess adult educational needs and develop plans for remediation;
3. Establish satellite/off-campus sites, thereby making literacy classes more accessible, and;
4. Provide a referral and program information system to government and community agencies.

The initial establishment of satellite off-campus classes at various sites and the interaction with government agencies, community agencies, and various organizations enabled the project to serve 689 adults at 17 sites as of the end of the school year.

The primary purpose of this manual is to provide educators with a "how to" and suggestions/recommendations to be considered by those who would like to develop a plan of action toward assisting adults in need of literacy education.

The appendix includes final program statistics, area map, list of site locations, and other generated information.

The encouragement that students feel after every success, the satisfaction of learning English, and the achievement of personal goals make the program worthwhile for all who participate.

HOW TO START UP

The importance of networking throughout the various phases of the project should not be underestimated. The process of networking, in the broad sense, is the establishment of contacts that are linked or interconnected with one another to assist in achieving one's purpose. Networking increases the awareness of the program, whether the contact is through direct sources or indirect (secondary) sources. We feel the impact of strong networking will be felt for years to come as students inform other students, teachers inform other teachers, and agencies inform the general public.

1. Become familiar with your area. Look at:

   - area maps
   - location of schools
   - public facilities/places where people congregate
   - churches
   - parks
   - libraries
   - retirement and nursing homes
   - government and community agencies
   - places of employment
   - supermarkets/food stores
   - shopping centers

2. Gather demographics. Contact:

   - city hall
   - public libraries
   - area schools

3. Call contact person at each potential site.

   - a contact person who is enthusiastic about the literacy program will be instrumental in the eventual success of the program
   - have the objectives of the program firmly in mind
   - clearly explain the prupose and objectives of the program

4. Meet with the contact person. Discuss:

   - the program purpose and objectives
   - the days and hours that the facility is available
   - equipment available (to avoid duplication)
   - the type of clients who use the facility (to determine possible student needs)

5. Evaluate the facility. Look for:

- free access, no physical barriers
- no cost factor; be sure the site is free to the program
- sufficient space, tables and chairs to accomodate students
- sufficient ventiliation and light
- location where students can concentrate with a minimum of distractions

HOW TO SELECT TEACHERS

1. Gather resumes of certified teachers who might be available to teach during the available time periods.

2. Interview teachers. Be sure to consider:

   - teacher's ability and willingness to teach the adult learner
   - teacher's educational background
   - teacher's methodology, especially as it pertains to the adult student
   - teacher's flexibility as regards approaches to learning
   - teacher's flexibility as regards the hours that the class will be taught
   - teacher's experience (if any) in adult education (although not critical, experience in this area could be very beneficial to the program).

3. Match each teacher with the students at each specific site.

   The importance of matching the teacher to the type of students at any particular site cannot be underestimated. Successful matching is a key ingredient in any successful program of this type. Students who accept and feel comfortable with their teacher and his/her teaching style will be much more likely to return to class on a regular basis. In turn they will also "recruit" friends and family who can become students in the class as well.

HOW TO GATHER MATERIALS

1. With the purpose and objectives of the program in mind, use the on-site teacher as well as the teachers at your school to gather ideas and materials.

2. Be sure that the materials considered are adult oriented. Although students may be working on an elementary school level, books written on that same level but written specifically for the adult learner are an important component.

3. Contact book publishers to gather information on what resources are available for adults.

4. Don't be afraid to be flexible with materials from site to site. What works at one site may not work at another site.

HOW TO RECRUIT STUDENTS

1. Word of mouth is the primary and most effective source of recruiting adult students, especially when dealing with students who may be in need of literacy assistance.

2. Written promotional materials should be developed and distributed. These would include flyers, signs, posters, newspaper articles and advertisements.

3. Referral agencies including those in government and in the community may be able to refer students to your program once they have become aware of the purpose and objectives of the program.

4. Personal visits by the program coordinator to area meetings, parks, churches, etc. are a valuable source of recruitment.

HOW TO MAINTAIN THE PROGRAM

1. Sufficient support, monitoring and recognition of the teachers and the students is vitally important.

2. Publicizing the program's existance and successes will help to insure the future success of the program. Human interest stories in local newspapers about the class and its students is very beneficial.

3. Recognition of each student's successes both within and without the classroom will encourage those in the program to continue in the program. Success breeds success.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The success of the model depends greatly on the project's staff. The coordinator must be proactive and totally committed to the project goals. He/she must be an adult educator who has a broad understanding of the adult learner and adult programming. He/she must know the targeted community, must be knowledgeable in needs assess- ments strategies and must be able to negotiate for sites that are at no cost to the center. In addition, he/she must offer continued support to the off campus classes that are established.

Well-trained teachers are also essential. They must be self-starters and dependable. There is a direct relationship between the teacher's committment and the students' attrition rate. They must possess specialized knowledge in adult philosophy, competency based curriculum, classroom management, recruitment techniques, and a diversity of adult oriented strategies for various levels of understanding.

In summary, the following are important suggestions to consider:

1 Be aware of the importance of the contact person's enthusiasm and support for the program.

2. Do not become discouraged if you do not receive immediate confirmation from a potential site. Situations change and many sites may call back after they have had time to evaluate the benefits of the program.

3. Be aware that every site is unique. What works at one site in terms of materials and teachers may not work at another site.

4. Allow time for a rapport between the students and the teacher to develop before making changes in personnel. Consider moving teachers from one site to another if difficulties in this area arise. A teacher who is not effective in one site may prove to be ideal in another site.

5. Be aware of the importance of well-trained teachers.

6. Use additional personnel as resource teachers. They can assist in starting up the program, and in monitoring the program; they can serve as a valuable liason between the school and the site.

APPENDIX

POPULATION SERVED - IMPACT OF LITERACY

Hallandale Adult Community Center began the 1988-89 school year with four (4) sites and added thirteen (13) additional sites during the year, making a total of seventeen (17) sites.

The total population served by all sites was 689 students. The following is a statistical breakdown:

Age Grouping:	16 to 24 years of age	53	(08%)
	25 to 44 years of age	128	(19%)
	45 to 59 years of age	39	(06%)
	60 years of age & older	469	(67%)
		689	
Sex:	Male 221 (32%)	Female 468 (68%)	
Race:	White	382	(56%)
	Black	168	(24%)
	Hispanic	139	(20%)
		689	
TABE Scores:	0 - 4.9	637	(93%)
	5 - 8.9	52	(07%)

PROJECT CONTACTS

Interaction with agencies and community groups has resulted in the following list of contacts:

Department of Correction/ Probation & Parole Services
Job Services of Florida and Job Corps.
Department of Vocational Rehabilitative Services
City Leisure Services Dept. & Police Department
County libraries
Nursing homes
Rehabilitation centers
HRS/Project Independence
Employment & Training Administration
City Human Resources Department
County Parks & Recreation
Local housing authorities
County Social Services Division
Community civic associations

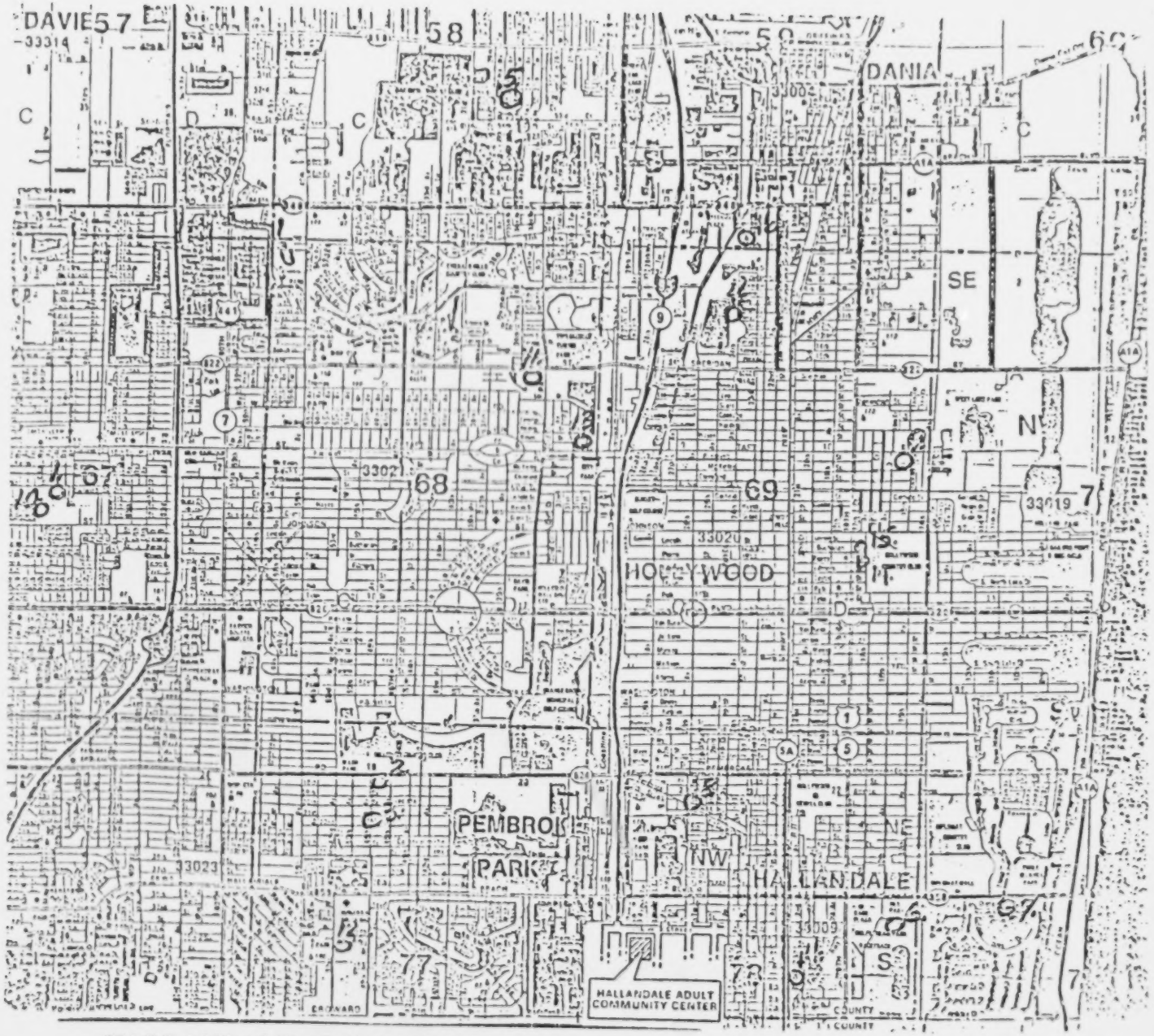
HALLANDALE ADULT COMMUNITY CENTER
SATELLITES/OFF CAMPUS SITES

SITES	CLASS	DAYS	TIME
Apollo Middle 6800 Arthur Street, Hollywood	ESOL	MTWTh	6:15 pm - 9:30 pm
Bethune Elementary School 2400 Meade Street, Hollywood	ABE	T & Th	6:15 pm - 9:30 pm
Carver Ranches Multipurpose Center 4733 S. W. 18th Street, Hollywood	ABE ABE ABE	MTWThF MTWThF MTWTh	8:00 am - 11:30 am 12:30 pm - 3:30 pm 6:00 pm - 9:15 pm
Carver Ranches Park 4750 S. W. 21st Street, Hollywood	ABE	MTWThF	8:00 am - 2:15 pm
Crystal Lakes Center 3100 N. 24th Avenue, Bldg #12, Hollywood	ABE	MTWTh	5:15 pm - 8:30 pm
Golfcrest Nursing Home 600 N. 17th Avenue, Hollywood	ABE	M & F	1:30 pm - 3:30 pm
Griffin Park 2901 S. W. 52nd Street, Ft. Lauderdale	ABE	MTWThF	8:00 am - 2:30 pm
Gulfstream Park 901 South Federal Highway, Hallandale	ESOL	MTWThF	1:00 pm - 5:00 pm
Hallandale Rehabilitation Center 2400 E. Hallandale Bch. Blvd, Hallandale	ABE	MTWThF	8:30 am - 11:30 am
Hepburn Center 800 N. W. 8th Avenue, Hallandale	ABE	MTWThF	8:00 am - 11:15 am
Marol Village (ACLF) 1601 N. 16th Avenue, Hollywood	ABE	T & W	1:30 pm - 3:30 pm
Montella Park 1111 N. W. 69th Way, Hollywood	ESOL	MTWThF	8:30 am - 1:30 pm
North Park (ACLF) 2480 N. Park Road, Hollywood	ABE	M, T & F	9:30 am - 12:45 pm
Orange Blossom (ACLF) 3533 S. W. 52nd Avenue, Pembroke Park	ABE	MTWThF	8:45 am - 11:45 am
Pentecostal Church 709 S. E. 1st Avenue, Hallandale	ESOL	MTWTh	6:45 pm - 10:00 pm
Southeast Focal Point 3081 Taft Street, Hollywood	ABE	MTWThF	12:30 pm - 2:30 pm
St. John's Episcopal Church 1704 Buchanan Street, Hollywood	ABE	MTWThF	9:00 am - 11:00 am

HALLANDALE ADULT
COMMUNITY CENTER

SATELLITES/OFF CAMPUS
SITES

1. Apollo Middle
2. Carver Ranches
   Multipurpose Center
3. Carver Ranches Park
4. Crystal Lakes Center
5. Griffin Park
6. Gulfstream Park
7. Hallandale Rehab
   Center
8. Hepburn Center
9. Marol Village
10. Montella Park
11. North Park
12. Orange Blossom
13. Southeast Focal Pt.
14. Pentecostal Church
15. St. John's Episcopal
    Church
16. Bethune Elementary
17. Golfcrest Nursing Home



HALLANDALE ADULT COMMUNITY CENTER
SATELLITES/OFF CAMPUS PROGRAM

TRICKS USED BY NON-READERS OR INADEQUATE READERS

Employers can use this list of indicators or tricks that may be frequently used by employees who are non-readers or inadequate readers:

1. State that they didn't receive a written correspondence.

2. State that they didn't have time to read correspondence; claim they're too busy or too pressured with deadlines, and ask others to tell them what's written.

3. Delegate reading and writing assignments, saying they are too busy to be bogged down with paper.

4. Shy away from or refuse to take on jobs, activities, etc., that require reading.

5. Delegate the correction of memos and other text to others.

6. Say they don't have their reading glasses with them.

7. Claim that the print is too small and ask others to tell them what is written.

8. Ask favors of others on tasks that require reading or writing.

9. Be defensive and on guard to resist requests any time someone asks them to do something that requires instant reading or writing.

10. Be creative and deviate from the true issues found in the reading material. Invent new issues rather than speak to the points of the written material.

11. Delay giving their response to written correspondence so they can have time to get someone to read and interpret the material for them.

12. Avoid proofreading, then blame others for erroneous material to which they place their signature.

13. Ask others to spell even the most common words.

14. Compose charts of the words that they must often use.

15. Tell others "I'm a"people" person , not a paper pusher, so don't write me memos and notes; pick up the phone or come by and talk with me. I won't bite you."

16. Insist on the benefits (saving time, increasing esprit de corps, etc.) of doing assignments orally rather than using the cold, impersonal medium of paper.

Source: Florida International University, University Park, Miami, Florida

TO: Hallandale Adult Community Center

FROM: _____

DATE: _____

SUBJECT: Referral for Educational Services/Project: Outreach

This is to introduce our client, _____

Social Security # _____ Phone # _____

Address: _____

_____ Zip _____

Please report to the Guidance Office in Room 111.

Center Hours: Monday through Thursday- 7:40 A.M. to 8:00 P.M.
Friday - 7:40 A.M. to 2:45 P.M.

Center Location: Hallandale Adult Community Center
1000 S. W. 3rd Street
Hallandale, Florida 33009
Phone # (305) 457-2516

Guidance Counselor: Please submit copy to Outreach Coordinator.

Date: _____ Counselor: _____

BEST DEAL IN TOWN

ADULT EDUCATION!

Would you like to improve your
Spelling ..... Writing ..... Reading?

Do you like to refresh basic skills.....
learn new things ..... be with others?

Come join our free **ADULT BASIC EDUCATION** class
See Eliza at the class office
Century Village Clubhouse
or call 435-6133

Classes will be held on Monday, Wednesday and Friday
1:00 P. M. to 3:00 P. M.
Come in or call so that we can get a class started.

This outreach program is in cooperation with:
HALLANDALE ADULT COMMUNITY CENTER

Broward County
Public Schools

TO ALL ADULTS:

The Family Resource Center at the Bethune Elementary School Needs You!

Do you want to.....

learn or refresh your basic skills in reading, writing or improve your math?
learn to speak English?
learn new things?
talk and be with others?

Come join our free ADULT BASIC EDUCATION class at:

Bethune Elementary School/Family Resource Center
2400 Meade Street
Hollywood, Florida

For information phone: 926-0860

Classes will be held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings
6:15 P.M. - 9:30 P. M.
** Class will begin Tuesday, May 9th, 1989 **
Continuous Registration - No Charge - Gratis
BRING A FRIEND OR A RELATIVE

This literacy outreach program is in cooperation with:
Hallandale Adult Community Center
1000 S. W. 3rd Street
Hallandale, Florida

Broward County Public Schools

MONTELLA PARK

CLASES
DE
INGLES
GRATIS

HOLLYWOOD

DEPENDIENTE DE HALLANDALE ADULT COMMUNITY CENTER

INGLES PARA NONATIVOS DE LA LENGUA

ADULTOS: 16 AÑOS, EDAD MINIMA

INSCRIPCION:

MONTELLA PARK
1111 N. W. 69TH WAY
HOLLYWOOD, FLA. 33024
DE LUNES A VIERNES
8:00 A.M. a 1:30 P.M.
TELEFONO: (305) 921-3402

NIVELES: BASICO-INTERMEDIO-AVANZADO

AREAS de APRENDIZAJE:

ESCUCHAR-HABLAR-LEER,
ESCRIBIR-RAZONAR
EXAMEN de RESIDENCIA
Y/O CIUDADANIA

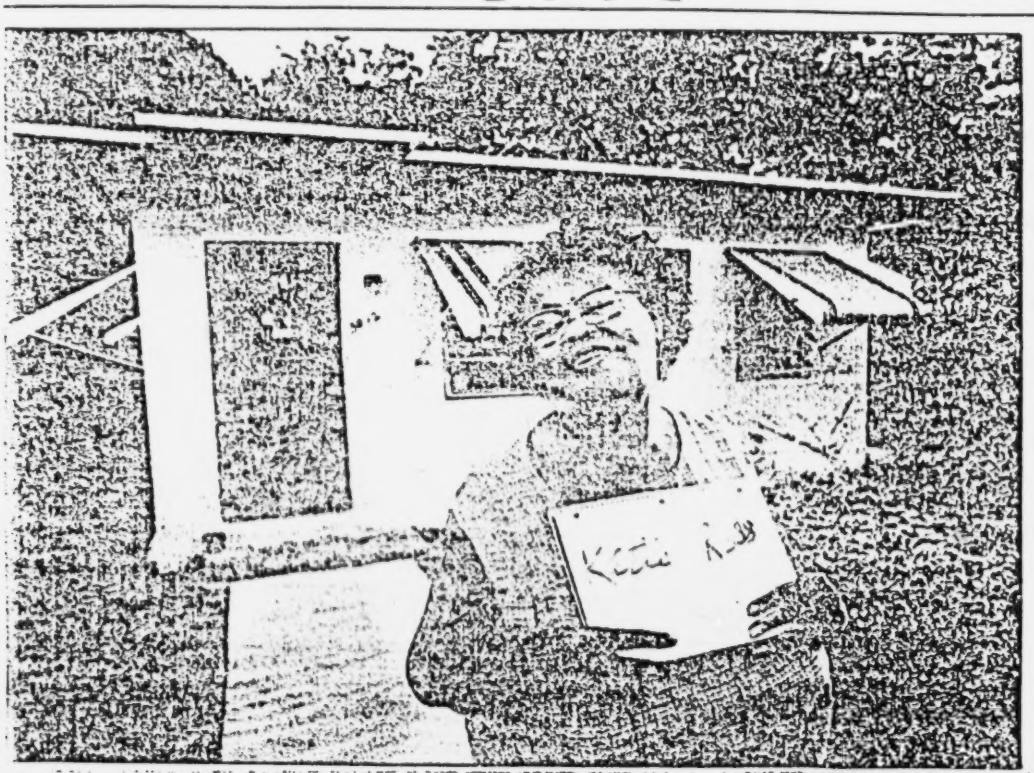
PROFESORA: ESTELA CORSETTI

MATRICULA ABIERTA TODO EL AÑO

Broward County
Public Schools

Broward News

turday, October 15, 1988 The Miami Herald Section BR



PETE CROSS / Miami Herald Staff

Katie Ross, an adult education student, shows a sample of her writing.

Woman gives self gift of literacy

'Reach Out' program offers adults a second chance

By DIEDTRA HENDERSON
Herald Staff Writer

Katie Ross can write the words 'Katie Ross.' Every time she goes to class she writes it three times on her tablet. The letters magically come together to form words she now recognizes.

Ross is among the mass of under-educated residents in Broward whose ranks are estimated to number more than 100,000.

Some are ashamed, after years of hiding their inability to read, to step forward as adults to ask others half their age to teach them. It's a deficit they mask with flair, memorizing information they have coaxed others to read, toting newspapers or magazines they pretend to read, making excuses when pressed to read a letter, contract, application or bedtime story.

Ross, 73, shed decades of anonymity and sought help.

The ninth child in the family of a hard-working, oft-moving father, Ross didn't see much of the inside of a classroom in her youth. Her dad's job distilling pine sap to make turpentine and rosin kept the family hopping and Ross out of school. At age 10, she started working.

"I went through my first year of primer, first grade," Ross said. "I didn't have the opportunity to go to school. My older sister, she went to school. She would teach me at home."

Last year, Ross decided to finish school. Despite failing eyesight and infirmities of old age, she buckled down to get a real education. The mission took her to a program called Reach Out for Literacy. That program was started in September by the Hallandale Adult and Community Center with a $50,000 state grant to seek out and educate residents such as Ross.

The adult school was looking for ways to find more of the estimated 54,000 South Broward adults who can't read or do

Turn to LITERACY / 5BR

73-year-old gives herself precious gift of literacy

LITERACY / *from 1BR*

so with difficulty. It was awarded the only grant in Broward from a state fund of $743,000.

The money was enough to add four new adult education satellites — at Carver Ranches, Crystal Lake, Hallandale Rehabilitation Center and Montella Park — to the six mini-centers the school already runs.

The more satellites, the greater the potential to reach adults older than 16 who need help reading and writing, said Harold Bear, Hallandale Adult Outreach Program coordinator. Currently, 87 students are signed up in the four classes.

By the most current estimate, 115,202 adults age 25 and up in Broward can't read or write or are only semi-literate.

"We know those numbers are on the low side," said Gale St. John, assistant director of adult and community education for Broward County's public schools.

FOUR FRONTS ADDED TO LITERACY WARS

A $50,000 state grant funded the start-up costs for four new centers as part of Hallandale Adult and Community Center's plan to "Reach Out for Literacy." The centers and their programs are:

- **Carver Ranches Multipurpose Center, 4733 SW 18th St., unincorporated South Broward. Basic reading, writing and math lessons for adults from 6 to 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday. 457-2516.**
- **Crystal Lake One Stop Center, 3100 N. 24th Ave., Hollywood. Basic reading, writing and math lessons from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday. 922-1355, 457-2516.**
- **Hallandale Rehabilitation Center, 2400 E. Hallandale Beach Blvd., Hallandale. Basic reading, writing and math lessons from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. Monday through Friday. 457-2516.**
- **Montella Park, 1111 NW 69th Way, Hollywood. Lessons in English for people whose native language is not English from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. 921-3402, 457-2516.**

The state fund that awarded the Hallandale grant targeted literacy projects, said John Lawrence, chief of the state Department of Education's Bureau of Adult and Community Education.

"They refer to it as a second chance in life," said Ross' teacher Margaret Clark, 58.

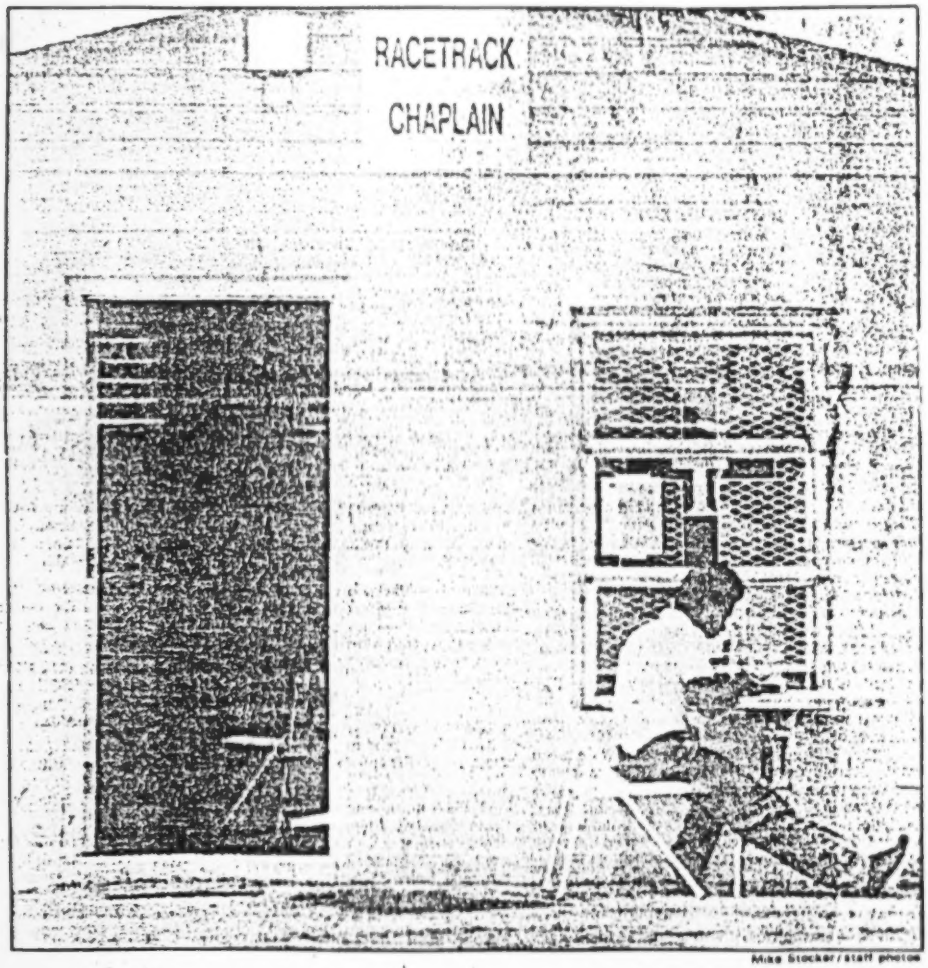
Beatrice Strachan, who quit school in the seventh grade, tries to coax other elderly residents to come to class with her.

"I encouraged several people. They were grown. They were embarrassed. Some of them never went to school; they didn't have the privilege," said Strachan, 71. "I said 'It's embarrassing if you can't sign your name. That's the embarrassing part.'"

Ross is spared that shame. She works extra hard when the light is good and her weakening eyes can focus on the printed words. She does the best she can when her vision clouds.

"I just learned how to write my name this year — don't you tell my teacher, she had a time with me trying to write my name. Every time I go to school I write it three times in my tablet and I still can't get that 'a' right," she said. "I can't make capital letters. She's doing her best to get me to learn them. She tries her best."

Putting horse-sense to work



Mike Stocker/staff photos

Grooms, walkers learn to read at race track

By Bernie Woodall
Sun-Tattler staff

Behind the pine trees at the final turn at Gulfstream Park, in a tiny race track chapel, men and women who take orders from horses are learning to read.

A horse, of course, can't talk, but the grooms and hot walkers are there for the animals and not the other way around.

But bilingual reading teacher Olivia Gentilello is there for them, courtesy of the Hallandale Adult and Community Center's "Reach Out for Literacy" program.

Her classroom isn't a standard one, not by a long stretch.

It's a 20-foot-by-16-foot concrete hut without air-conditioning that serves as a chapel for the Rev. Jerry Tyler, the track chaplain. Three folding tables barely fit. Gentilello holds class there from 1 to 5 p.m.

please see READERS, 2A

In a tiny chapel, at top, racetrack workers are learning to read and, above, write.

13 centers reach out to educate illiterate adults

By Bernie Wendall
Sun-Tattler staff

If you know someone who can't read this article, read it to him or her.

The Hallandale Adult and Community Center's "Reach Out for Literacy" satellite centers have educators who teach adults to read and write.

There are several types of classes offered.

Adult basic education teaches people whose primary language is English to better their skills or develop them from scratch if needed.

Someone whose primary language is Spanish can learn to read and write English at three of the 13 satellite centers where classes are taught.

Encourage your friends who need help reading to attend. Tell them no one will make fun of them in class. And they will find others who share a reading goal.

About 4 percent of those counted in the 1980 U.S. Census in Broward had not finished the fourth grade. And 16 percent had not finished the eighth grade, the level at which adults are considered "under-educated," said Gale St. John, assistant director of adult and community education for Broward's public schools.

That means, in 1989, an estimated 70,000 adults have education levels below the fourth grade, 260,000 below the eighth grade.

Anyone who reads at below the eighth-grade level can be helped by the Reach Out for Literacy program, St. John said.

Teachers at the centers work with students one-on-one in a small classroom setting. It is set up so students work at their own pace and don't feel pressure to perform. Students attend as often as they can. And it's free.

Reach Out for Literacy survives on a $50,000 one-time state grant. Roberta Durbin, the Hallandale center's principal, said the satellite reading courses will continue next year with funds from her school's budget.

The program is run by Harold Bear, coordinator of outreach programs at the adult and community center. For more information, call him at the center, 457-2516.

Or, call one of the 13 centers. Here's a list of their locations, phone numbers and the program they offer. ABE stands for adult basic education. ESOL stands for English as a Second Language — bilingual education for Spanish-speaking students.

- Apollo Middle School, 6800 Arthur St., Hollywood. ESOL classes from 6:15 to 9:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. 985-3000.
- Carver Ranches Park, 4750 SW 21st St., Carver Ranches. ABE classes from 8 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. Monday through Friday. 981-6993.
- Carver Ranches Multipurpose Center (next to the Broward County library at Carver Ranches), 4733 SW 18th St., Carver Ranches. ABE classes from 8 to 11:30 a.m., 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. and 6 to 9 p.m., Monday through Thursday. 985-1920.
- Crystal Lakes Center, Building 12, 3100 N. 24th Ave., Hollywood. ABE classes from 6 to 9:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday. 922-2355.
- Griffin Park, 2901 SW 52nd St., unincorporated Broward. ABE classes from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. (This week the first classes will be held here.) 981-2751.
- Gulfstream Park chapel, 901 S. Federal Highway, Hallandale. ESOL classes from 1 to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. 454-7000, Ext. 278.
- Hallandale Rehabilitation Center, 2400 E. Hallandale Beach Blvd., Hallandale. ABE classes from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. Monday through Friday. 457-9717.
- Hepburn Center, 800 NW Eighth Ave., Hallandale. ABE classes from 8:30 to 11 a.m. Monday through Friday. 458-3251.
- Marol Village, 1601 N. 16th Ave., Hollywood. ABE classes from 1:30 to 3:30 Tuesdays and Thursdays. 923-5057.
- Montella Park, 1111 NW 69th Way, Hollywood. ESOL classes from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. 921-3402.
- North Park ACLF, 2480 N. Park Road, Hollywood. ABE classes from 9:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays. 989-8008.
- Southeast Focal Point Senior Center, 3081 Taft St., Hollywood. ABE classes. 966-9805.

READERS

FROM PAGE 1A

weekdays, and if all 23 students showed up at once, they couldn't all find seats.

But like everything these horse handlers do, their schedule revolves around the thoroughbreds that have top billing in the daily racing forms. When a groom or hot walker — someone who walks a horse after a race until it cools down — isn't busy, he or she can slip into class for a couple of hours.

All of Gentilello's students are adults, and the few with any measure of formal education speak Spanish and are from Mexico or South America.

They've come to learn for different reasons.

"I'm interested because I want to know what my boss is saying," said Salvador Hernandez, 18, through Gentilello as translator.

Isabel Mata-Andres, 53, is one of several studying to become U.S. citizens, meaning Gentilello must throw in a few lessons about Washington, Lincoln and the reason for the 50 stars and 13 stripes on Old Glory.

Gentilello's class is one of 13 being taught in satellites of the Reach Out for Literacy program.

"It's a very easy class to teach because they are all very eager to learn," Gentilello said. "We have three different levels here. One group is of people who are illiterate in their native Spanish language, and I have to start at the bottom with them, teaching the ABCs and numbers. A middle group knows a little in their native language but has to learn English."

And then there are the advanced students who fall into two categories, such as Jose Luis Majana, 31, who has picked up English around the race tracks but doesn't know how to read or write.

Victor Cisneros-Gomez is the anomaly in the class. From the Mexican state of Michoacan, he says he's a licensed obstetrician in Mexico. But because of the devaluation of the peso, he can make more money as a groom here than as a doctor in Mexico.

Cisneros-Gomez, 29, has Gentilello teaching him English well enough so that in a few years he can take an examination to practice medicine in the United States. He is catching on quickly and is the only university-educated student among the 23.

A few handlers are American and want to polish their skills. Hot walker Dave Wellwerts, 30, comes to hone his skills for the General Education Development test.

Like almost all the men and women there, he travels the race circuit with the horses. In the summer, they are in New York or New Jersey, and in the winter they come to Florida.

Horses rule their lives, even in terms of reference points. Wellwerts remembered the last time he talked with a reporter.

"Let's see, '84 was when Swale died, so it must have been in '85."

Gulfstream isn't the only race track that helps its employees with adult education, but it is in the minority, Wellwerts said.

"Most of your employers don't care if you learn," he said. "They're afraid you'll move on if you do. They want to keep you ignorant."

READERS CONTINUED ON PAGE 2A

Hallandale Digest, Thursday, November 10, 1988

Hallandale Community Center is reaching out to help

By Caron Conway
Digest Staff Writer

Imagine not being able to read or write.

Imagine taking the bus and not being able to identify street signs. You know where you're going only by landmarks. Imagine that you can't get a job unless somebody else fills out the application for you.

Statistics show that about 25 percent of the population of the United States can be considered "functional illiterates. One of them could be a neighbor, a co-worker, a friend. They cover it up well. They somehow manage to get by.

A new program implemented by Hallandale Adult Community Center is trying to get those who can't read or write to step forward and get the help they need to survive in today's world.

Called "Reach Out for Literacy," the free program is offered at 10 satellite locations in Hollywood and Hallandale. Depending on the needs of the community at each site, students receive instruction in adult basic education, GED preparation or ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages).

The school received a $50,000 grant from the state Department of Education to operate the program for one year. It began in August.

Outreach program coordinator Harold Bear said the response from the community has been excellent."

"People are reaching out more. I think the trend is there," Bear said.

He estimated that more than 250 people are participating. Classes have started with as few as five students. The students themselves have helped recruit more participants.

"They start developing the ability to see others who need the skills," said Bear.

Students range in age from 16 to 86. Some of them are recent high school dropouts. Others haven't stepped inside a classroom in years.

There are several reasons for the program's success. Bear said the neighborhood classes are convenient and the students feel more at ease in familiar surroundings. They receive individual instruction and feel close to the teacher.

"What we're trying to do is to bring literacy classes out to the area where the people live. They probably wouldn't come to the school," Bear said. "It's kind of been an evolving program determined by the needs of the people. They come when they can meet their schedule."

Classes meet for 12 to 15 hours per week. Some are held during the day, others at night. The instructors test each student to determine his or her level.

"Every person comes in with different skills, different needs," Bear said.

No credit is offered for the classes. The end result is to motivate the students to go through the adult education classes and move into the GED program, Bear said. Some students are encouraged to enroll in the school's dropout prevention program or take vocational courses.

"In some cases, it's a matter of getting a better job," Bear said. "Some employers won't give you an application to take home. That's one of the ways an employer can see whether a person can read and write.

In many cases, it's a "big thing" just to learn to write the alphabet, said Bear. He said it's amazing how many people in our own neighborhoods have been able to cover up their weaknesses.

"We're trying to raise the literacy level of the people. That's our ultimate goal. It's a slow process and that's why the teacher is so important."

Bear said the most difficult step is admitting the need for help and actively seeking it.

"They keep coming back," he said. "They're finally satisfying a need that they have felt. They're proud of it. They're no longer hiding."

The "Reach Out for Literacy" program is offered for residents of three area nursing homes, at the Hepburn Center, 800 NW Eighth Ave. in Hallandale, and at the following Hollywood sites: Carver Ranches Multi-Purpose Center, Carver Ranches Park, Crystal Lakes One-Stop Center and the Southeast Focal Point Senior Center. ESOL is offered at Apollo Middle School and Montella Park.

Bear said additional satellite sites may be added.

"Wherever there's a need, we're certainly willing and able to meet that need for the people," he said. "If we're able to service the people, that's the name of the game and that's what counts."